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*Readings*  
*in*  
*Canadian Slavic*  
*Folklore*

II  
Texts in English Translation

by  
J. B. RUDNYC'KYJ

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1961

Canada

University of Manitoba Press

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DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC STUDIES

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in  
Canadian Slavic Folklore

II

**Texts in English Translation**

Compiled and edited  
by

**J. B. RUDNYC'KYJ**

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The University of Manitoba Press



READINGS IN SLAVIC FOLKLORE

Part 4

READINGS IN CANADIAN SLAVIC FOLKLORE

II. Texts in English translation

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*The University of Manitoba Press*

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## FOREWORD

The present volume of *Readings* concludes the folklore series initiated by the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Manitoba, in 1951. Intended originally as a chrestomathy of Slavic folklore *Readings* not only provided advanced students of Russian, Ukrainian and Polish languages with samples of the oral tradition of the three major Slavic peoples, its rich vocabulary and varied stylistic forms, but also suggested the information implicit in folklore about the life, character and history of the peoples concerned.

In 1958, the first part of *Readings in Canadian Slavic Folklore* was published. It contained stories of the origin of local names and adaptation of English toponyms to Slavic, pioneer stories, songs about Canada, proverbs and sayings, and other material.

It should be noted, however, that while Slavic folklore texts, particularly those in Ukrainian, are freely available, texts in English translation are somewhat scarce in the Western World. Even such publications as *Slavic Folklore — A Symposium* (The American Folklore Society, Inc., 1956), issues of the *Journal* of the above Society, publications of the *Peabody Museum* at Harvard, and similar, offer very little in this respect. For this reason the appearance of a final volume in English must be considered as an important chain in the series.

The following material corresponds with the texts published in the first part of *Readings* in their original version. The selection has been made on the basis of the author's book: *Ukrainian Canadian Folklore* (Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, Winnipeg 1960). Some texts taken from Russian, Polish and other folklore have been added.

\*

There are many individuals to whom I am indebted for materials, suggestions and criticism. Several of them are named under respective texts. My debt of gratitude

is to my colleagues: Professor Honore Ewach, of St. Andrews College in Winnipeg, and to Professor R. Mac G. Dawson, of the University of Manitoba English Department, for their translation and reading of the final draft of the manuscript respectively.

I am indebted to Professor Svatava Pirkova Jakobson, Harvard University, Dr. Stefan Kozak, Brandon College, Dr. M. I. Mandryka, Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, Dr. Yar Slavutych, University of Alberta, and others, for their constructive criticism and fine suggestions.

It gives me also great pleasure to express my gratitude to the Humanities Research Council of Canada for its generous grant, and to the University of Manitoba for an additional grant, which enabled me to collect the folklore materials and to publish them in English.

Winnipeg, August, 1960.

J. B. R.

## 1. PIONEER STORIES

### ADVENTURE IN THE WOODS

The father of a pioneer family in the district of Rembrandt, in northern Manitoba, left his home and went in search of work, leaving behind his wife and two children. The boy was about ten and the little girl about six. One evening the mother told them to go and fetch the cattle from the woods. The children set out, but, as they heard no cow-bell, they wandered in the woods without any success. It got dark, but they still found no cows. They got lost. The little girl could not walk any further. Fortunately her brother had a few matches in his pocket, and he collected some dry twigs and started a fire. They sat down by the fire and started to doze.

Suddenly they heard a crackling sound in the bushes. The little girl was scared and snuggled up to her brother. Then there came out a bear who looked at the children and the fire. He stood there for a while and then disappeared again in the bushes.

After a while they heard a crackling sound in the bushes again and again the bear appeared. But this time he carried in his fore-legs an armful of dry faggots. He came near the fire and threw all the faggots in the fire which was by then almost out. The big bear stood there for a few minutes, as if waiting to see if the fire would blaze up again, and then disappeared in the depths of the woods for good.

(Submitted by *M. Woroby*, Winnipeg, Aug. 4, 1954)



## AN INDIAN COMES TO THE RESCUE

Once four of us men went in search of homesteads at Rainier (in Alberta), and got lost in the woods. After eight days of wandering, we found an Indian. We told him through gestures that we were hungry. He brought us to his tent and roasted there for us some fish on a stone, without using any lard or salt.

We spoke with him in sign-language.

We paid him four dollars each for taking us back to the railway track. He charged us nothing for the food. One could catch fish merely by hitting it with a stick.

The Indian knew his way well. He brought us right to the railway track and pointed toward Rainier with his finger.

(Told by Mr. H. Bodnar of Redcliff, Alberta, August 28, 1953)

## INDIAN TRAILS

Once when I was walking with an Indian I told him:

"Take me to such and such a place."

And the Indian answered:

"Yes, I can take you there, as there is an Indian road to that place."

I thought:

"Well, if there is a road, then I'll go."

When I set out with the Indian I saw one twig bent this way and another that way. Then I asked:

"Where is the road?"

"This is the road," he said. "There is no path, but this broken twig shows the way."

Sometimes they (Indians) pile up some stones for a marker. Where there was no broken twig there was a pile of stones. The sharp edge of the stone points out the way.

The Indians are far more sharp-sighted than we. An Indian notices things much better than we, the white people. I had been out with Indians many a time. I would be observing intensely. The Indian would say:

"A deer has just run by." Well, he did see it, but not I...

(Told by a man at Janow, Man., 1953)

## ON MEETING INDIANS

I was alone (on a farm) when some Indians came riding by. The men were walking by the horses. I locked myself in, shaking with fear like this in the house. They passed on by the house, but stopped in the shade for a rest further on on our farm, as it was summer, perhaps July. Then two of them started to walk towards me. I thought that it was of no use to keep the house locked, for if they wanted to kill me, they could unlock the house. They came near. And there I stood, with my five children, and I said:

"Children, perhaps we shall die, for there come two Indians."

The Indians had long hair. One of them stepped out forward and asked:

"Are you Ukrainian, Ruthenian?"

And I said: "Yes."

He spoke in my language. Then he pulled out from the bosom of his shirt a cross, hanging on a black ribbon, showed it to me and said:

"I am hungry."

Well, I could give him lots of things to eat, as I had salted pork, and eggs, and all kinds of other things. But I was afraid to ask him to come in, though I had to do it. So one of them came in, leaving the one who kept silent outside. I gave him some bread, cheese, butter, and some uncooked eggs. He took all those things and went back to his people. I was looking through the window and saw that they set up a fire and began to cook eggs. Then I brought then a pailful of milk and some more bread. They ate their meal, rested for a while, and then set out again on their way to Ethelbert.

(Told by *Paraska Danyliuk* of Regina, Sask., May 28, 1953)



## GETTING READY TO BUILD A HOUSE

We rested for a few days after our trip from Edmonton which had been made by sleigh in about 60 degrees below zero weather and which had lasted two nights and a day, and after passing a night in the woods between two fires, I set out with my dad four miles into the woods from the place where we intended to settle, to cut down some trees for the building of our house. As it was too hard to tramp the distance each day through deep snow, we used to take with us enough food for a whole week and pass our nights in the woods. We came home only for Sundays. For days we kept cutting down trees and carrying logs on our shoulders, the larger end of the log resting on Dad's shoulder and the smaller on mine. We slept between two fires on blankets spread on the snow. We took care of the fires by turns: when dad slept I kept the fire from dying out and from spreading, and when Dad had had some sleep I would lie down to sleep, leaving him on guard.

Thus we were cutting down trees for three weeks, carrying the logs together on our shoulders through the deep snow in the woods. When at last we thought that we had enough logs for a house and a stable, hoping that some day we would possess horses and at least a small cow, we gave a big sigh of relief. And Mother said on the occasion: "Thanks to our Lord." We were exceedingly glad at the thought that we were going to have house of our own.

Next day Dad began asking people if anyone who had his own horses or oxen would care to help us to bring the logs to our farm from the woods. But, when he at last found such a man and we went into the woods for the logs we found just the imprints of our logs in the snow... The logs had disappeared like a piece of camphor. So we had to cut some more logs.

(Told by *T. Tomashevsky* of Edmonton, Alta., 1951)

## A NIGHT'S LODGING IN A POPLAR TREE

(A reminiscence)

I came to Canada in April, with brotherly feelings towards my employer, a farmer of Ukrainian origin. Next day he told me: "You may work off at least your board by helping me to clear off some bushes from the ground."

I worked for a while at full speed, but made no headway.

My employer came out, took a look at my lack of experience, and grumblingly said: "Let me have your pick-axe. I'll show you how to clear off the bushes."

He let his pick-axe go down with full force. The still-frozen earth flew up with force, in little lumps, striking the eyes of the farmer. He couldn't see, so I gave him one end of my handkerchief to hold, took hold of the other end, and thus I led him to his home. There his wife washed out the dirt from his eyes. That was the end of my bush-clearing job.

As luck would have it, at that moment a man came to the farm-yard, fastened his horse, came in, and took a look around. Then the farmer's wife said, pointing at me: "He was a house-builder in the Old Country. But we have no money yet for the construction of our house."

Then the stranger asked me: "Do you know what a carpenter's level is?" I answered: "Yes, I do know." He asked me again: "Do you know what a carpenter's square is?" And I answered: "No, I don't." Then he explained to me what the English word "square" meant in Ukrainian. I said that I knew what a "square" was. So he said: "I came here to offer you work, at two dollars a day."

Oh, Lord! How glad I was! At that rate I would make fifty dollars per month! Then we set out for his place. While we were going through four miles of woods and sharp turns he told me what kind of wild animals there used to be here, saying that there were still some wolves, wild cats, wild pigs (sic!), bears, and even moose, as big as domestic oxen.

We soon reached his land. I worked at his place until Saturday. After supper, while it was still daylight, I decided to go back to my former employer to fetch my razor. After I had covered about two miles of my way, a dark cloud overspread the sky and made it so dark that I could hardly see my own nose. Furthermore, there was a loud crackling sound in front of me, as if somebody was breaking twigs. I thought that it was either a bear or a moose. So I quickly climbed up a poplar-tree and fastened myself with my belt to a branch, to be on the safe side. Then it began to thunder, with lightning flashing through the sky. I made the sign of the cross and began to pray, asking God to keep away the lightning from the poplar-tree where I was. Then it rained heavily, soaking me and chilling me through. When the clouds passed by it was already dawning. Then I found out that I had been scared by horses.

(Told by *Wasył GolaŹewich* of Bankend, Sask., November 30, 1954)



## A SNAKE ABOVE OUR HEADS

Finally our shack at Hudson Bay was ready for use. The chinks between the logs were more or less filled up with clay. So we lay down there to sleep. We were hardly down when my brother cried out: "Daddy, Daddy, look! There is a snake above us!"

"Be quiet, be quiet, children!" said father, getting ready to sleep.

So the snake coiled up and passed the night above us, behind the chimney.

Thanks to God, no harm came to us.

(Told by *Mrs. Anna Zhybchyn* of Yorkton, Sask., August 23, 1953)

## FOLK MEDICINE

It is fifty-six years since we came to Canada. At first we stayed in one place at Sifton. Then we set out again: Dad, Mother, my sister and I. We were walking on foot to Mink Creek. On our way, my sister stepped on a nail and it went right into her foot. We walked down the road. It was raining hard and there was so much water that it came up to our knees as we waded through it. My sister's foot got so badly swollen that we almost carried her, supporting her with our hands. We walked twenty miles before we reached the place of the man whom we set out to see. There my sister could not sleep at all for two nights. Then the owner of the place advised us what to do. He told us to put some coal oil in warm water and to let my sister soak her foot in the solution. She kept soaking her foot for a day and night. By then the pains had stopped in her foot and she felt much better.

(Told by *Mrs. Kryworuchka* of Roblin, Man., May 18, 1953)

## MY NARROW ESCAPE

(*A pioneer's story*)

This happened a long time ago, in a certain district in Canada, at the time when we were building a church on a high hill in the woods, as there was not much cleared land yet.

When we were building up the cupola, we could see far away above the woods, fields, and houses. So once I decided to take a short-cut from the church to the house of the farmer where I lodged, as it took me twice as far to walk down the road. But I had no success. I came by and by into an open field. Then I knew that I had become lost. I found there a stack of sheaves and a pitch-fork. By means of the pitch-fork I climbed up to the top of the stack, and pushed some sheaves to the side, thus making a bed for myself. So there I fell asleep, still holding the pitch-fork in my hands. It was daybreak when I woke up. I could hear a terrible commotion nearby. When I looked down I saw wild boars chasing a bear. The bear was running towards the stack. Soon he was right by the stack, near me. Then he began to hurl sheaves at the boars. He was looking down at them as they were tearing the sheaves to shreds. I was afraid that the bear might throw me down too, if he saw me. So when he was just about to throw down another sheaf I ran the pitch-fork into his body. The bear fell down among the boars. It was a feast for them.

I sat there quietly for a long time, being afraid that the boars might take me for another bear, sitting in hiding.

(Told by *Wasył Golayewich* of Bankend, Sask., Nov. 30, 1954)

NOTE: Evidently the narrator could not clearly see the scene below, as there are no wild boars in Canada or anywhere else in North America.



## NO DEATH FROM POPPIES

This was fifty-three years ago. I had some poppies with very large heads. I was pulling up the poppy plants and putting them in little heaps for drying. My step-son, Mike, a grown-up youth, was tying them up in sheaves. Then there came to our place a man from the crew that was making trail roads nearby, to offer a job to my step-son. He told him:

"Whenever we approach any house the women-folk hide, so we can buy no provisions. You will work with us, and, since you speak their language, you will buy the food for us."

"Mother," said Mike, "I am going to have a job at seventy-five dollars a month. I am going to work with the surveyors, making trails between the farms." As he was saying this, he was throwing handfuls of poppy seeds into his mouth. When the surveyor realized what he was doing he said:

"For Jesus' sake! you are going to die. Then you wouldn't be able to come along with me to your job."

"No," said Mike, handing some poppy seeds to the man. But the man refused to take the seeds. Then Mike said: "No, it will not make you die. Eat it. If you die, I'll take your place at work." Saying this, Mike gave the man a handful of poppy seeds. The man put some of it in his mouth, and said: "Good".

Later on both of them came to my place for Sunday dinner. I filled up a bowl with poppy seeds for the man and asked him: "Are you still alive?"

He asked: "What?" Then Mike explained to him that I was asking if he were still alive. And he answered: "No, I am not dead yet."

(Told by *Mrs. Paraska Danyliuk* of Regina, Sask., May 28, 1953)

## HOME-BREW

(*A tall tale*)

My daughter was living on the other side of the river. She was making home-brew at a time when four policemen were approaching her house... I wish I could have been at her place in time. I was late on account of the flooded condition of the river, which was swollen by rain. Before I came to her place, the policemen were already there. They were waiting for me while I was wading the river, with my skirts up. And she was still brewing it...

Well, they found the whiskey. Whom were they going to arrest? They were going to take her husband. So she said to her husband:

"You stay home. The boys will help you to milk the cows and do other chores, and I will be doing nothing while staying in the jail."

She stayed there three months. She said:

"While staying there I didn't have to milk the cows... There were seven of us women there, serving our terms for making home-brew. We used to be up and ready at five in the morning. After having our breakfast we hoed the potatoes. Our guard would be all smiles, joking and telling us stories in our language. I liked staying there so much that I wouldn't mind staying there every day... So I'll make some more home-brew so that I can stay there again..."

(This tall tale was told to *P. Danyliuk* of Regina, Sask., May 28, 1953)

## A WEDDING WITHOUT A BRIDE AND GROOM

I am going to tell you now about my wedding with the bride and groom away.

We set out from home for the church ceremony to a place some thirty miles away where there was a priest. So we came there. But I should have told you before that we asked them before we went away to invite some wedding guests and to hire some musicians and to have eats and something to keep the people's throats moist. . . We promised to be back on Thursday.

It was Sunday when we set out. On Monday and Tuesday there still was no priest. In fact, we waited there for the priest over a week. We were wedded at the beginning of the next week. Then we set out back for home. From Kamsack we travelled by train to Togo, where we passed the night. Next day we had no choice but to walk back home on foot on account of the deep snow.

When I came back home mother raised quite a fuss. She said:

"We had a wedding party here, without you newly-weds. The guests had a good time, singing and dancing. Well, they are already gone."

There were no wedding guests when we came back home. Such was our wedding party, with the bride and groom away.

(Told by *W. Yurchak* of Roblin, Man., May 20, 1953)

## FOCUS A WOMAN INSTEAD OF A BEAR

A long time ago we used to dig plant roots which are called in English sumac roots. We made our living by picking and selling them at twenty-five cents a pound. Once our neighbour's wife, an elderly woman, went out to pick sumac roots. It was drizzling. I was out, too, with a shotgun. The woman was at quite a distance from me. She had on her Old Country sheep-skin coat, with fur on the outside — a precaution taken to prolong the life of the other side of the coat. She bent down, digging the sumac roots.

As I was emerging from the woods into an open space, I took a look around and caught a glimpse of a bear. I stood there for a while, wondering what I should do. But, as I had a shotgun, I decided to shoot, no matter what happened. I took aim, but still stood there waiting for the bear to turn his head my way. I was afraid that if I failed to kill the bear with the first shot, it would be my end. The bear would kill me. Well, when the bear turned his head in my direction, I realized that it was really our neighbour's wife, picking sumac roots. O good Lord! I made the sign of the cross with my right hand, saying: "In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost! Amen." I was glad that I just failed to be a murderer.

(Told by *Mr. P. Ryliak* of Yorkton, Sask., August 23, 1953)

## DUCK-HUNTING

Once, when my husband was still young, he went duck-hunting. When he fired his shotgun, the recoil was so strong that the gun hammer squashed his nose. I saw him coming back home, carrying a bag half-filled with duck or something. His nose was bleeding, his shirt bespattered with blood, and he was all soaked up to his waist. When he came near I said:

"Oh, my gosh, what hit you? Why are you so wet?"

"Well, get a knife and come along," he said.

When we came to the place where we cut our fuel wood, my husband cut open the bag and shook the ducks out of it. The ducks all flew up, as they had been just in a swoon, or "gun-deafened".

But I still had my husband, though with a squashed nose.

(Told b *Mrs. W. Yurchak* of Roblin, Man., May 18, 1953)



## THE HONOURED GRAIN

I remember that once, when I came into this district, a man was transporting some wheat in his wagon and one of the bags of grain slipped down and fell in the middle of the road.

The other farmers drove their wagons either a little to one side of the bag of grain, or to the other. But no wagon went straight over the bag with the grain. But now . . .

(Told by *Mr. F. Zabolotnyj* of McGregor, Manitoba,  
September 12, 1954)

## MAY GOD PROTECT US FROM AN UPSTART!

Now I am going to tell you about those of our people who came here before us. Our proverb which says: "May God protect us from an upstart!" fits some of them so well.

When we came to Canada in the twenties some of those who had come here ten or more years before were already made railway section foremen. Some of them were very hard on us.

"Look at me!" such an upstart would say. "Look! Even your ears blush in shame at the sight of work. What a man — you can't even say 'bread' in English... Shake a leg! Shake a leg!"

Some of such men were regular slave-drivers. There was no choice. One had to do what they said.

Sometimes it was even necessary to quit working for such slave-drivers.

(Told by *I. Roshko* of Calgary, Alta., June 2, 1953)

## MY FIRST "REGISTRATION" ON ARRIVAL

When I came to Winnipeg and went out for the first time for a walk down the street, with a friend, we saw a huge policeman. (That policeman is gone by now, as this happened forty-three years ago, in the spring.) He was continually swinging back and forth a stick, with a string attached to it. We stopped and kept on looking at him, holding our Old Country passports in our hands. But the policeman passed by without even taking a look at us. An idea came to me: "Well, since the policeman has passed us by, I'll catch up with him and tell him to report me, or rather to have my arrival registered."

So I kept on running after him. When he stopped on Henry Street I caught up with him and held out my passport. He took a look at me and said something. But I didn't understand him, nor did he understand me. So I made a sign with my hands, asking him to sign my paper, thus taking notice of my arrival. He kept looking at me, imagining that I was in some trouble and not knowing what to do. He took another look at me and made me walk with him to a man (my countryman) who had an employment office.

"Now you are in the free country of Canada. You don't need to have your arrival registered," said the man to me.

I could hardly believe him. So I again approached the policeman. He burst out laughing and said to me:

"You may go now. You are a free man. You don't need to have yourself registered at all."

(Told by *Mike Hrushka-Harris* of Winnipeg, Man., March 6, 1954)

## "I LIKE GALICIAN"

This took place in 1912. I was just eighteen then. I set out (by train) for a far-off place in search of a job. I was tired and hungry when I came to the little town. I wanted to buy myself some food, but it was late in the afternoon and all the stores were closed. While I was walking down a street I met a troublesome fellow, standing by a burnt-down building. It seems the burnt-down building was a store, as I could see many pails and pots down in the cellar. The fellow stopped me and asked me where I was going. I told him that I was going to buy myself some food. Then he grasped me so firmly that I couldn't free myself. There was nobody in sight and I didn't know who the fellow was. He asked me:

"Are you Galician? I like Galician..."

As I was afraid of him, I told him that I was a Galician.

I expected that he would let me go, but he had no such notion. I could see that he was drunk, as there was a strong smell of whiskey. I was afraid, so I cried out, and I struck the fellow's arms down. I freed myself of the man's hold and pushed him away from me. He fell down into the cellar, on top of the tinware. He made quite a clatter, beating his feet against the pots, and cried out: "Help! help!"

I told him that I was not going to help him, as I was hungry and sleepy.

I ran away from there, as I was afraid that the fellow might pick a fight with me.

I ran away from the town and came to a stop in a farmer's field. I brought together some sheaves and made myself a lair and I lodged there for the night. Next day, when I came back to the town I did not see the troublesome fellow again.

(Told by *P. Todorchuk* of Ashville, Man., October 2, 1954)

## ABOUT THE MENNONITES

The Germans (Mennonites) had no need to buy any pigs. They raised their own pigs, three or four, and killed them for meat in the autumn. Later on, before Lent, they used to kill a two-year-old heifer or a steer.

The first time that I worked for a German his wife kept telling me:

“Your people eat no meat during Lent.”

So next Friday she baked some potatoes for me. But they kept on eating a lot of meat and very little potatoes. They used to say jestingly to me:

“Your people do not know yet some of the things. That’s why they still keep fast-days. There is no sin in what one eats, but in some of the words that come out from the mouth.”

Such was their advice for me.

(Told by *W. Ilyniak* of Chipman, Alta., June 28)



## DUKHOBORS IN CANADA

There is plenty to say about dukhobors. They came from Russia. To tell the truth, they were against "popes" (priests). They were called dukhobors by the priest Nikon. It is about two hundred years since they appeared on the scene. I can't tell you how many of them are in Canada about twenty thousand, I think. When we came to this coutry there were only seven thousand of us. Three ships carried us to Canadian shores. Then we arrived in Yorkton by railway. From Yorkton we came here. The majority are now in British Columbia . . .

(N. N., Verigin, Saskatchewan, 26. 5. 1953)

## MR. KOTSUR, FIRST UKRAINIAN PIONEER SETTLER IN CANADA\*)

He was so glad to see us. By that time he spoke German quite well. He told us enthusiastically of many things in Ukrainian. I remember that his surname was Kotsur, but I am not sure what his first name was.

Where did we meet him? In Saskatchewan.

He came from the Eastern part of Ukraine where he worked as a farm hand in a German settlement. He worked for the Germans (Mennonites) and he came along with them to Canada. It was already his twenty-third year in Canada then. At the time he had a few acres of tilled land.

This was somewhere near the Assiniboine...

We (Mr. Ilyniak and Mr. Pylypiw, J. B. R.) were looking over Saskatchewan at the time. Sometimes we went a little out of the way. That was how we discovered him. We saw a little cabin, went straight to it, and there we found him.

---

\*) At the time this book was being completed, there died at Chipman, Alberta, at the age of 97, Wasyl Ilyniak (Eleniak), one of the oldest Ukrainian pioneer settlers in Canada. In 1953, the compiler of this book recorded from him some very interesting reminiscences. Here we quote one of them about Kotsur who (very likely) was the first Ukrainian pioneer in Canada and to whom Mr. Ilyniak and Pylypiw paid a visit in the nineties. Mr. Ilyniak said plainly that Kotsur settled there in the seventies of the last century. However, a thorough research should be made about this in archives and histories.

## 2. NAMELORE

### ORIGIN OF FLIN FLON

Once a gold prospector went far north, together with his wife and their child. Winter came, but he still kept prospecting for gold. His wife fell sick and died. So he used to leave his child in his shack, in care of a dog. Once, when he came back home, he found a bloody track on the floor and no child in sight, but only his dog, looking cheerfully at him and licking his chops. At this sight, the prospector thought that the dog had devoured the child, and in his anger shot at it. The wounded dog crawled under a bed. The prospector bent down to get the dog, and saw his child also under the bed, safe and sound. The mortally-wounded dog died. It was only then that the prospector realized that the bloody track had been made when the dog attacked a prowling timber wolf and killed him.

The man became very sad when he realized the truth, and decided at least to bury his dead dog in a decent manner. He dug a grave for the dog, six feet deep, and, while digging, he found a vein of gold. Soon afterward he became very rich. In remembrance of his dog he founded a hospital for sick and wounded dogs. That hospital still exists, at Brandon. And around the place where he had his shack and where he buried his dog arose the town of Flin Flon.

(Told by *P. Surminsky* of Sydney, Man., October 12, 1954)

## THE BEGINNING OF DAUPHIN

When we came to Dauphin — it was not what it is now — we found there only four buildings: the immigration house, the railway station house, one small hotel and one small store. This was Dauphin when we arrived there as immigrants. We were unable to get a homestead in the district, for the homesteads there were especially reserved for the French and German settlers from Ontario. So we settled at Sifton. It has been only six years since we moved from Sifton to Dauphin. We sold our place there and bought ourselves a new one here.

(Told by *M. Pototsky* of Dauphin, Man., May 21, 1953)

## ORIGIN OF THE PLACE-NAME "BIRDS HILL"

In the beginning Guichimanitou created the heaven and the earth. The Red River flowed through here, to the north. Each year is used to overflow its banks. When the land was flooded the birds would seek the higher places which were still not flooded. There was only one very high hill in the Red River valley. So all the birds would flock thither during a flood and build their nests there.

As years went by the river floods kept on decreasing in number, but still the birds went to their nests on the hill on their return from the south each spring.

Here, in the valley, two Indian tribes, the Ojibways and the Crees, kept on fighting. Whenever the Indians were hungry they went hunting for the birds on the hill. They could also discover there whether the enemy was approaching, as, at the approach of a large number of men — of the enemy — the birds would start flying away in all directions.

That is why the hill was called "Birds Hill".

(Told by *Miss Emily Arabska* of Winnipeg, Man., February 9, 1955)



## ORIGIN OF THE NAME "ASSINIBOINE" IN MANITOBA

The white people gave this name to one of our rivers in memory of the Assiniboine Indians who used to come over from the present United States and camp by the river. Those Indians were known as "the ones who cook by means of stones" because they used to throw very highly heated stones into the water in their cooking pots to make it boil. In their language the word "assini" means "a stone", and the word "boine" means "the ones who cook".

(Told by *Miss E. Samila* of Winnipeg, Man., February 2, 1955)

## THE PLACE-NAME "HAYES"

It is said that the place-name Hayes in Saskatchewan had its origin in the special calls the local farmers used when they wanted their harnessed oxen to turn left or right, saying: "Haysa!" or "Hoysa!" (In English, "Ha!"). As the Ukrainian settlers kept calling out to their oxen "haysa" and "hoysa", their English neighbours learned those two words and used to call the Ukrainian ploughmen by that name. Thus in time the whole district acquired the name of "Hayes", for so it was pronounced by the English-speaking farmers. Such is the story.

(Told by *Mr. P. Swarych* of Vegreville, Alta., 1954)

### THE PLACE-NAME "MOOSE-JAW"

Once, when the pioneer farmers were travelling in a "Red River cart," one of the wheels broke down and they could not move on. They got hold of a moose jaw and managed to repair the broken wheel with it. So they called the place Moose Jaw.

(Told by *Mr. A. Wasley* of Moose Jaw, Sask., August 30, 1953)

### ORIGIN OF THE NAME "KUROKI"

Now I want to tell you about Kuroki. The name "Kuroki" is, perhaps, a name of an Indian tribe, as there is an Indian reserve nearby. The name of the nearby town of Wadena could be of similar origin, too.

(Told by *Mr. K. Batiuk* of Kuroki, Sask., August 14, 1953)

## ORIGIN OF THE PLACE-NAME "PIAPOT"

The little town of Piapot lies between Swift Current and Medicine Hat. When the C.P. Railway was being constructed through the region the local Indians did not like the idea of the white man's advance to take away their lands. The Indians came to the place, now called Piapot, under their chief, Piapot. The chief set up his tent there and intended to stop the white intruders.

There was a lot of trouble there with the Indians. A big fight took place. However, the railway was built through the place, and the new railway town was named in memory of Chief Piapot.

(Told by *Mr. A. Wasley* of Moose Jaw, Sask., August 30, 1953)

## ORIGIN OF THE NAME "QU'APPELLE RIVER"

It is said that this took place during the French period in Canada. A young French trader was hurrying in his boat to the place where lived his betrothed, as he had not seen her for over six months and the wedding was to take place in two days.

He kept on rowing, lost in thought. All of a sudden he heard someone calling him. It was a girl's voice. So he looked around and began to call back:

"Qu'appelle? Qu'appelle?" which means (in French) "Who calls? Who calls?" But there were no more calls. They say when he came to his betrothed's home he met a funeral procession. The night before, at the time when he heard someone calling him, it was his girl calling him in high fever. Thereupon she died.

That is why the river was called Qu'appelle.

(Told by *Miss E. C. Kyryliuk* of Winnipeg, Man., February 2, 1955)



## THE DISTRICT AND SCHOOL "UKRAINA" IN MANITOBA

Eight miles north of Sifton there is the little town of Ukraina. It has two general stores, a school, a post office, a community hall, and a church. The people of the district are farmers. As the soil is rather poor, the people are interested mostly in mixed farming; that is, they also have cows, poultry, and pigs. You can reach the town by car if there has been no heavy rain for a while, but you can reach it on any day by train.

All the people of the district are of Ukrainian origin. They still do a lot of visting and carol singing during the Christmas holidays, just as people do in the Old Country. Four miles west of Sifton there is a school called "Ukraina School". It is a "country school", as it is quite a distance from the town.

The people of the district can hardly be called "old timers", as some of them still have their Old Country clothes and still put them on on some special occasions. They still retain many of their Old Country customs. They still dance at times such Old Country dances as the kozak, the kolomyika, and the holub. Out of respect for the Old Country they have named their town and the school "Ukraina".

(Story by *Stepan Heshchuk* of Winnipeg, May 3, 1954)

On May 6, 1897, we lodged for the night in the woods, some ten miles north of Sifton. We deliberated then what name would best suit this new district and the future settlement. To the several suggestions Mr. Bodrug added his — to call it "Ukraina". George Syrotiuk seconded Mr. Bodrug's suggestion. So all of us then agreed to call the new district "Ukraina". Paul Wood wrote our "resolution" down in his note-book and promised to write about it to the immigration office in Ottawa. Later, two of our settlers, Wasyl Standryk and Dmytro Riwniak, sent a petition on this matter to the proper authorities. So, when, in 1898, the C. N. Railway reached that new district, the new railway town was officially named "Ukraina".

(Story by *Dmytro Romanchych* of Keld, Man., 1949)

#### THE ORIGIN OF THE SCHOOL NAME "UKRAINA" IN SASKATCHEWAN

When the school was being organized it was named "Etherofield" by the school secretary, Paul Baschell, of German origin. He named the school without asking anybody else in the district whether they liked the name or not. But the people noticed immediately that the school, in a purely Ukrainian district, was given a German name. So at the first meeting of the school trustees it was moved and seconded to have the name changed to "Ukraina". Soon thereafter such a change took place. Our petition was sent to Regina and our wish was approved there.

(Recorded from *N. Mihaychuk* of Gorlitz, Sask., Febr. 18, 1955)

## ORIGIN OF THE NAME "RUTHENIA" IN MANITOBA

The origin of the name "Ruthenia" is similar to other place-names in this province such as, for instance, Lviv, Kiev, Zoria and Petlura. Our first Canadian pioneers who came here from some districts of Ukraine, though they were all of Ukrainian origin, still called themselves by the old ethnic name of Ruthenians. That is the reason why one of the schools in Manitoba was named by them "Ruthenia". When, later on, a post office was established there it was called "Ruthenia", too, and the whole district around was known as Ruthenia.

Those first Ukrainian settlers who came here from the Ukraine and who still were accustomed to call themselves Ruthenians should not be mistakenly regarded as Russians (Muscovites) or Poles, for they were not. They were real Ukrainians, as I have remarked before, but they still used their old racial name which is not used any more.

(Told by *Mr. H. Boychuk* of Rosburn, Man., May 19, 1953)

## ORIGIN OF THE SETTLEMENT "KRASNE" IN SASKATCHEWAN

Krasne lies between Wynyard and Punichy. In the district there were woods and a lake at the time we settled there out on the homesteads. As it was far to any town from there, a few of us settlers decided to try to get a post office somewhere nearby. The postal department accepted our application. Then we had to find a suitable man for the position of postmaster, a suitable house for the post office, and a name for the post office.

We decided all these matters at a meeting on November 10, 1912, held in the house of Ivan Karmazyn. Mr. Karmazyn agreed to be our postmaster and the post office was to be located in his house, as he had a boy who had passed four grades of the public school and could fill out the postal forms. And since Mr. Karmazyn had come to Canada from a village by the name of Krasne, in the district of Skalat, West Ukraine, our meeting decided to call our post office and the district "Krasne". The twelve-year-old boy sent our resolution to the postal department, where the proposed name of "Krasne" was approved. So by the spring of 1913 we had our own post office nearby, with a Ukrainian name.

The new post office served the farmers of our district for over twenty years, until they cleared off the woods, made good roads, and began to use horses and cars. Thus it became easy to get to the nearby towns, especially to Wishart, through which went the C. P. Railway. By then it did not pay to maintain our post office, as most of the farmers of the district went to the post offices in the nearby towns while on business there. So our post office of Krasne was abolished then, but our district still bears that name and as such it is still marked on the maps.

(Told by *Ivan Bilinsky* of Punichy, Sask., February 26, 1950)

## ORIGIN OF THE PLACE NAME "SHANDRO" IN ALBERTA

"Shandro" was the surname of a very numerous family, and hence the place where it settled became known as Shandro. The eldest son, A. S. Shandro, in time became, as they say, our member of the legislature (MLA). He remained in the legislature for about twenty years. He often went among the people, so all of us knew him. He was a real pioneer, from the same country that we came from. We all knew the Shandro post office. I think it was called thus because the Shandros were a large family.

(Told by *Mr. I. Pawliuk* of Calgary, Alta., August 30, 1953)

## ORIGIN OF THE SCHOOL NAME "RADYMNO" IN ALBERTA

At the time, Mr. Fletcher, an Englishman, was the school organizer in Alberta. He arranged a meeting in our district at which three school trustees were elected. Thereupon we named our school district "Radymno", which was the name of a neighbouring town in the district of Yaroslav, in West Ukraine, where we came from. Our school district was organized in 1912, in 1913 we built our school house, and in 1914 the school was open. Our first teacher was Mr. M. Luchkovich who later on became the first Federal MP of Ukrainian origin in Canada.

(Told by *Mr. H. Koziak* of Edmonton, Alta., December 24, 1949)



## FROM THE POLISH-CANADIAN NAMELORE

*Redcliff*, Alberta, was named after red rocks on the banks of the river.

*Medicin Hat*, Alberta, was named after an Indian chief who cured people. Once he was walking at that place and was killed there. Only his hat remained. The story is true.

*Seven Persons*, Alberta; Seven killed persons were found at this place, hence the name.

(Told by J. Bulanda, Redcliff, Alberta, 31, 5. 1953)

## TOPONYMIC FOLK ETYMOLOGIES

Some Canadian names of places, rivers, creeks, lakes, and so forth had a somewhat familiar sound to the first Ukrainian settlers in Canada, and so the new settlers began to pronounce such place-names in their own peculiar way. One still may hear such "Ukrainized" place-names in some districts. Here we give a few examples:

Clear Lake, Man. — Krilyk (a rabbit).

Crooked Lake, Sask. — Kurkulyk.

Emerson, Man. — Merzon.

Round Lake, Man. — Ravlyk (a snail).

Stuartburn, Man. — Shtombury.

Assiniboine, Sask. and Man. — Svy-noboy or Svy-noboynya (a pig's slaughter-house, packing house).

Beausejour, Man. — Bozhi Dziury (God's holes).

Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. — Susysmaria.

Winnipeg, Man. — Vinnipok, do Vinnipku (to Winnipeg).

Fort Rouge (part of Winnipeg, Man.) — Futruzh.

Sainte Agathe, Man. — Syndygat.

Lac du Bonnet, Man. — Leydybony, v Leydybo-nakh (at Lac du Bonnet).

Fort William, Ont. — Fortvilia, v Fortviliyi (in Fort William).

Thick Bush, Alta. — Dykiy Bush (Wild Bush).

Saltcoats, Sask. — Solkivtsi.

Selkirk, Man. — Selkryk.

Gimli, Man. — Gimlya, or Shlandry ("Ice-landers").

Cook's Creek, Man. — Kustryk, z Kustryka (from Cook's Creek).

Egg Lake, Alta. — Iglyky, do Iglykiv (to Egg Lake).

Regina, Sask. — Vrodzayna or Vrozhayna (the fertile one).

Rapid City, Man. — Rapysyta.

### 3. ADAPTED "OLD COUNTRY" FOLKLORE

#### UKRAINIAN CHRISTMAS IN CANADA

At twilight, on Christmas Eve, father used to bring into the house a huge bundle of hay, to be spread all over the floor, in memory of the hay that Christ was born on. As we fasted during the day, we were hungry, but we were not allowed to eat until the appearance of the first star in the sky. Then we sat down at the table and said our grace. According to the age-old custom, we would start our Christmas Eve supper by eating some of the boiled and sweetened wheat grains. Father would dip his spoon in the boiled wheat grains and throw a spoonful of it up in the form of a cross. That was for good luck, to have a good crop of wheat next summer. Twelve Christmas dishes were served us, such as: cabbage rolls (holub-tsi), beet-soup (borshch), stuffed dumplings (pyrohy or varenyky), poppy-seed cookies, and such other dishes.

After the Christmas Eve supper we would sing Christmas carols, starting with:

God Everlasting is born,  
He has come down from Heaven  
To save all humanity  
And to gladden it.

"Glory to God!" let us sing,  
Let us honour God's Son,  
And to our Lord  
Let us bow.

(Recorded from *Mrs. A. Boychuk*, Rosscburn, Man., May 18, 1953)

## CHRISTMAS CAROLLERS AT VITA, MAN.

It was a custom with us at Vita, Manitoba, to have our carollers at Christmas time go from house to house and sing Christmas carols in front of the main window, to the accompaniment of cymbal and violin music. Then the carollers were invited in by the host. They would come again at night to greet the New Year. They used to sing in front of our main window, saying:

Let us in, please,  
For tip-tapping dancing:  
Here it is too cold  
For our dancing.

Then my parents would let them in. They had among them a cymbal-player and a violinist. The guests would dance and tip-tap in front of us, three girls. We stood in front of the dancers, holding some coins in our hand. The young men tip-tapped and sang:

Here I do tip-tapping  
In front of this beauty  
Who will reward me  
With gold coin.

In answer the girl would sing:

I have the coin  
But you shall not get it  
Until you dance here  
Low on your haunches.

As the girl sang, she would drop her coins in the upturned hat held by the dancer. Then the dancers would invite all the girls to dance and general dancing would start.

(Recorded from *Mrs. A. Mandziy*, Calgary, Alta., June 2, 1953)

## EASTER IN CANADA

On Easter morning we used to go to church to have our Easter food blessed. On coming home, we had our Easter meal. Then the young people would play Easter games on the common green by the church, singing spring songs. We girls would stand in a circle, holding hands, and sing:

By the priest's willows  
Wild deer were frisking,  
Up and down, up and down,  
Among the bushes of roses and cranberries.

We sang this running around the church. Then we would sing:

Along the willowy board  
Sweet Nellie is walking back and forth,  
Carrying water in a sieve  
To put out the fire in the grove.

Later we would sing about the winding cucumbers, thus:

Big cucumbers, keep on winding, keep on winding,  
And you, lasses, all get married.

(Recorded from *Mrs. A. Mandziy*, Calgary, Alta., June 2, 1953)

## JOB-HUNTING

As there was no more work in Alberta in 1914, four of us set out in search of work in more distant places. While on our way we got lost and for three days we had nothing to eat, not even a slice of bread. There was no bread at the farm-house where we came to, nor could we buy bread at any other place. We walked on to Swift Current. There we bought tickets and came by train to Moose Jaw.

At the time they were building up a big flour-mill at Moose Jaw. Thousands of the unemployed men were waiting there, lodging on the surrounding prairie land, hoping to get a job in case somebody were fatally injured on the job... In case of an accident at work, one of us would get a job. It was such a rush-job. The foreman kept on rushing their men. If a fellow with a wheelbarrow made a false step on a high-up plank, some parts of his wheelbarrow would be left clinging to the scaffolding below, but very little of the poor fellow's body. But there would be a new job opening. By and by another accident would occur.

I didn't like what I saw there, so I went on to Regina, and from there I went to settle down on a farm. It was the fear of what I had seen that made me settle on a farm.

(Told by *M. Pywarchuk* of Regina, Sask., May 29, 1953)



## FIRST UKRAINIAN RELIEF IN CANADA.

Many unemployed men then came to Edmonton from Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, and Swift Current, as there was no work for them on the railway. It was a pity to look at them, they were so exhausted and neglected, looking like so many cadavers. There were about fifty of them walking aimlessly in the town. Then I had a talk with them and found out about their pitiful plight. I went with them to the police station. The police had no way of helping the unemployed, but they told me to go with the unemployed to the land office. There the unemployed received about ten dollars each for flour.

Then I went to the editor's office of our "Bulletin". I put an advertisement in the newspaper, saying that there were many unemployed men in our town who would be glad to do any kind of work, even at twenty-five cents a day, to earn at least enough for food. In answer to our advertisement, the unemployed were invited to split fuel wood in three places. Soon I had them organized into detachments, and these detachments went from place to place doing some kind of work, clearing bushes from the lots, digging garden plots, digging cellars, filling up abandoned cellars, and such work.

During the two months of the railroad workers' strike the detachments of the unemployed earned together in our town about \$800, though previously, before the unemployed got organized, it would not have been possible to earn even fifty dollars. We built up several wooden cabins and plastered up their walls nicely with clay, dug a few wells, made smooth, even paths joining the town, and cleared off bushes from a large tract of land by the bridge to be used as exhibition grounds, which is still being used.

For all the jobs that we did we were not paid individually but we deposited the earned money at the Johnson Workers' Store which employed a Ukrainian man, Ivan Metelsky, as a clerk. There each man could buy as much food as he needed, his bill being charged against the deposited fund. Each of our unemployed men could thus buy food for himself, whether we used him for our jobs or not. The men worked at our small jobs by turns, so that all of them performed a certain amount of work, and therefore had equal rights to benefit from our earnings. If any man left a family out on a farm we shared our earnings also with those families. From time to time we sent food parcels to them.

Thus, in 1901 we had our first Ukrainian relief organization in Canada.

(Told by *P. Svarych* of Vegreville, Alta., August 25, 1953)

## WHAT HAPPENED ABOUT A BELL AT LEDWYN, MAN.

On my arrival in 1927 the old church building was still standing. Later on the people decided to buy a bell for the church belfry. They collected donations for the purpose and augmented the fund by having all kinds of parties. But it was decided that if any individual donor donated more money than was collected from all the small donations together, his name would be engraved on the bell. Well, there was such a donor who supplied more money for the bell than the rest together. The consecration ceremony took place, with the newly-acquired bell resting on a few stools for the consecration.

Next day the church building, with the bell still inside, burnt down altogether — just because somebody did not like seeing someone else's name engraved on the bell. Later on a new church building was built — the one that still stands.

(Told by *M. Hawrysh* of Ledwyn, Man., September 2, 1954)

## ECONOMIC DEPRESSION IN 1929

I came to Moose Jaw and there I was given a job in a restaurant by my army friend. After working there for two weeks I was laid off.

Then I went again in search of work. I went outside of the city, to a park, and I found there a lot of hoboes with an inscription on the soles on their shoes: "\$8.00 or Quit".

I was wondering what it meant. Just then there came in some farmers who woke up some of the hoboes. But the hoboes didn't get up. Each of them said:

"I'll work on your farm, if you pay me eight dollars a day."

Soon the farmers realized that the hoboes were not just jesting, so they left them alone and went away.

Then came the economic crash in the autumn of 1929.

Even the hoboes began to move around then, with no more inscriptions on the soles of their shoes. We were moving then in search of work from sea to sea, with no one halting us, no one stopping us, or forbidding us to move. We went around in search of work, but even then our government (Mackenzie King's at the time) helped us to make a living. We were provided with some kind of work, so that no one died of starvation then in Canada.

(Told by *I. Roshko* of Calgary, Alta., June 2, 1953)

## FROM POLISH-SLOVAK FOLKLORE: JANOSIK

[Explanatory note: According to a Tatra legend, the *ciupaga* (a combination of a walking stick and a hatchet) of Janosik, the Robin Hood of the Tatra, had the power, it is said, to multiply the regiments of the army, and the shepherd's belt which he owned had the power of making him invisible when it was necessary. The lords of Liptow, whom Janosik plundered mercilessly, learned of it, and they planned to catch him asleep. Thus they hired a girl to lure the fellow to her house, and there, when Janosik fell asleep, she took his belt and his *ciupaga*. And as a result, the Hungarian magnates, who were on watch, easily took him. Some time before that, Janosik had danced with the Empress Maria Theresa, whom he had attracted very much, and who was to enlist him in her army, because he, his *ciupaga*, and belt together were equal to a regiment of soldiers.]

Oh, God, what happened in the manor of Bardyjow: Janosik was caught with a girl in a room. When they caught him, they bound him and had him taken to the city of Mikulas. The magnates of Liptow welcomed him nicely: "Welcome ye, little bird, Janosik; now we have caught you." "Lords of Liptow, I am begging of you for the first time: give me the *ciupaga* into my hands once more." But they did not give it to him, because they were afraid, and they did not give the *ciupaga* into his hand. "Lords of Liptow, I beg of you once more: give me my belt to gird myself once more." They did not give it to him, because they were afraid; they did not give him his belt to gird himself about. "Lords of Liptow, I ask you once more, let me

dance a *zbójnicki* dance once more." They let him dance, because they were not afraid. And they ordered him to dance the *zbójnicki*-dance. Janosik is dancing, a gypsy is playing, and darling death is dancing beside him. And when Janosik finished his *zbójnicki*-dance he went to the gallows and finished his life there. A coffin of boards is being made for Janosik, and suddenly a decree of mercy comes from Theresa from Vienna. The decree came, and the high priest is reading it. Janosik is freed from the guilt and from punishment. The magnates from Liptow were very much troubled they had to pay for dead Janosik a quarter of silver per year. And so the name of Janosik will never die, neither high on the summit nor deep in the vale!

(Recorded by W. Gawron, Redcliff, Alberta, August, 1953)



## UKRAINIAN-CANADIAN PROVERBS

America is a sister, and Canada is the mother.  
(*Kirkland Lake, Ont.*)

\*

All are led to Canada by rosy promises. (*Winnipeg, Man.*)

\*

If you stay too long in Winnipeg, poverty will beset you. (*Winnipeg, Man.*)

\*

Like the beings of the wilds, people wander about in Manitoba, and in tatters they walk about in Alberta. (*Calgary, Alta.*)

\*

A car is a "kara" (punishment). (*Roblin, Man.*)

#### 4. CANADIAN ANECDOTES

##### LANGUAGE MISUNDERSTANDING

In the past the people of Ladywood, Man., were so painfully pestered by the mosquitoes that it was necessary towards nightfall to set up smudges for self-protection. My mother, living each summer alone with us children (father being away from home earning some money), used to set up a smoking smudge each day after sunset. One day an English-speaking neighbour came over to our place to buy a pig. He tried to convey to us what he wanted by saying several times the word "pig". But my mother couldn't grasp what he meant. She heard him say "pig" which sounded to her very much like "peek", which means in Ukrainian "burn". So she brought out a pail of water and poured it on the smudge, being under the impression that the man got scorched...

(Told by *T. Kozyra* of Ladywood, Man., August 8, 1954)

## "DRUSHLAK" (COLANDER) IN ENGLISH

At the time when our first pioneer settlers came here from the Old Country they naturally needed to buy some utensils for the house. Once a pioneer housewife went to a store to buy herself a colander. She looked all over the store but she couldn't see any colanders, and she couldn't tell the store-keeper in English what she needed.

The next day she sent her husband to the store.

When he came in the store-keeper asked him:

"Can I help you?"

In answer, her husband said:

"I like to buy a pot where the water she go, and macaroni she stop."

That's how he said "a colander" in English.

(Told by *Mrs. I. Shchepanska* of Fort William, Ont., Aug. 8, 1953)

## A MARE IN PLACE OF NAILS

As we knew no English, some of our first experiences here were very painful. One autumn, after we were through with the harvest work, I was employed at the same time by two brothers, one by the name of Jack Angus and the other Adam. It was very hard on me to work at the same time for two farmers. Once, when it was raining and we couldn't do any threshing, the two farmers started to build a granary. I assisted them in the work as much as I could. The day before, my boss, Jack Angus, bought some nails for the purpose when he paid a visit to the town of Russell. But, as ill-luck would have it, Jack forgot about the nails when we left in his buggy next day for Adam's place to build a granary there.

When we arrived at the place Jack noticed that he had forgotten to bring the nails along. So he went back to get the nails, as his place was just a little over a half-mile off. I heard only two words in what he said to me that were familiar to me — the buggy, and something like "Nellie". Well, he had a horse by the name of "Nellie". So when I came home I went to the stable and found out that Nellie was let out to graze on the farm. So I went out, and took hold of Nellie, brought her home, harnessed her, hitched her to the buggy, got up on the buggy, and set out. When the brothers saw me coming back in a buggy they were surprised. They burst out laughing. Then I realized that I made some mistake. They asked me where I was going in a buggy. I didn't know what to say. Then my boss, Jack Angus, came over and, pointing at the package of nails, said: "nails". It was only then that I realized my mistake in fetching the horse by the name of Nellie in place of nails. . .

(Told by *D. Yaremiy* of Rossburn, Man., May 18, 1954)

## BLUFFED THEM

"Well, wifie, have you a toothache? Perhaps I should knock it out?" he said jestingly. "You know, once a man had some of his teeth knocked out. So he said:

"How I have fooled them! Those were not my own teeth..."

(Told by B. M. of Ledwyn, Man., September 2, 1954)

## THE "BOMBOSA" SHOES

As her husband was getting ready to go downtown, the wife said: "My good man, get me a pair of shoes, *bom bosa*."

When the man came back home he said to his wife:

"I went from place to place throughout the day and saw all kinds of shoes, but I couldn't find any "Bombosa" shoes. May be they sell such shoes only in the States."

("Bom bosa" means in slang Ukrainian "because I have no shoes.")

(Told by T. Yuzwyshyn, Winnipeg, Man., November 26, 1954)

## RUSSIAN FATHERLAND

An emissary of the U. S. S. R. in Canada asked a newcomer to Canada how he liked the old fatherland. He answered:

— Just like my wife . . . I love her a little, I fear her a little, and I desire another a little.

(P. F. K—en, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 22. 7. 1954)

## A CZECH IS NOT POLISH

A Czech newcomer wanted to buy shoepolish in the store. He could not express himself in English, but showed his shoes to the storekeeper:

— Shoepolish? — asked the storekeeper.

— No, me Czech, me not Polish — was the answer of the Czech patriot.

(F. Hluboček, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 23. 4. 1954)

## “ENGLISH YOUR POLISH”

A Pole in Winnipeg enrolled at the Evening school in order to “polish” his English.

— You’d better English your Polish — a Canadian friend told him.

(K. T., Winnipeg, Manitoba, 5. 5. 1954)



## OF SHEVCHENKO

I came then, at harvest time, to Saskatoon, and I met a friend of mine who had been living there for quite a long time. Well, he invited me in as his guest. As at that time (in 1928 or 1929) life was still very simple, it was quite natural for my friend to bring out a bottle of whiskey for a treat. So we started to drink. After the glass made its first round among us, we just smacked our lips. Then we appealed to our friend, saying: "Our friend, let's have another one, for, as you know, even Taras Shevchenko used to drink at least two at a time." So he sent his glass to make another round trip among us. After our second drink we made another appeal: "They say that Taras Shevchenko really used to have three drinks at a time." So our friend sent the glass to make a third trip among us, smiled and said: "Well, maybe he did drink as much, but not as one of such free-booters as you!"

NOTE: Yes, quite often even a great name is thus abused in order to get some more drinks . . .

(Told by *I. Roshko* of Calgary, Alta., June 2, 1953)

## HIS PAYMENT FOR THE WORK

Through the whole winter I was employed by a saw-mill at Roblin. At the end of the season I asked my boss for my pay. He said: "I have no money on me now. I'll pay you later on." But he did give me at the time a chunk of moose meat; I brought the meat home. My wife took one look at the meat and said: "It stinks," so we threw it out.

By and by I came again to claim my wages, the money that I have earned. But my boss said: "I gave you a chunk of meat. So now we are quits..."

(Told by W. Yurchak of Roblin, Man., May 18, 1954)

## HE FAILED TO HIDE HIS MONEY WELL

Once there was a rich man, who sold his oxen for a good price. A thief, who had noticed where the man hid his money, stole it. The thief ran away and after a while came back, bewailing his ill-luck, just to mock the rich man whom he had robbed. So the rich man asked him:

"Why are you crying?"

"Well," said the thief, "a while ago I sold my oxen but the thieves have robbed me of my money."

"Why didn't you hide away your money, just as I did?" asked the rich man.

(Told by *Ilya Kyriak*, Winnipeg, Man., December 21, 1953)

## PANICKY IVAN

Long ago, while we still lived at Grafton, we had a very panicky man for our neighbour. The man was especially scared of the darkness. On the nights when the wolves were yelping and howling his wife could hardly quiet him down.

One night his wife woke up and looked out a window. It seemed that it would soon rain. She remembered then that she had left some little chickens outside, behind a pile of wood. So she tried to wake up her husband.

"Wake up, Ivan, go out and put the little chicks in the hen-house, as it is going to rain."

Ivan got up, stepped outside, but remained standing by the threshold, being afraid to go any further.

"It's not going to rain, Annie," said he.

"A likely story," said his wife. "Go ahead!"

"But I am afraid, Annie."

"Go ahead, Ivan! The little chicks might perish. Oh, Ivan, go ahead! I'll be waiting here, by the door, for you."

"Well, what am I to do, if the wolves attack me?"

"I'll be watching you from here and save you in case of need."

So Ivan started to move on slowly, but he was so afraid that he couldn't see where he was going. His Annie was watching him. Suddenly she cried out:

"Ivan, you are heading for the pile of wood!"

"Oh, my God!" cried out Ivan, "where is that wolfish brood?"

(Told by *Miss M. Lukiy* of Grandview, Man., August 4, 1954)

## TIT FOR TAT

This took place at the time when one of the trans-continental railways was under construction in Canada. An Englishman and a Ukrainian were lodging for the night in one of the tents. Once the Ukrainian asked his English companion:

"What's your name?"

The Englishman answered:

"Bob English. And what is your name?"

The Ukrainian thought that the Englishman was just making fun of him, so he answered:

"John Ukrainian is my name."

(Told by *Ivan Boychuk* of Sandy Lake, Man., August 4, 1954)

## LONG OVERTIME WORK

Once there was an elderly man working in a factory. One day the manager asked him:

"How long have you been working here?"

"Oh, nearly sixty-five years," answered the man.

"And how old are you?"

"A little past forty."

"How is this possible?" Asked the manager. "You say you have been working here sixty-five years, but you are just forty. How's that?"

"Well, I have taken into account all my overtime work."

(Told by *Miss M. Bednarska*, Winnipeg, Man., August 8, 1953)



## A "GARA" IS A "KARA"

In time I got married. Then we settled on a farm. Years went by, and we managed to pay off what was due on the land, and got ourselves even a "gara" (car). So I wrote my father a letter, saying that I was married, was well off, and had a "gara".

In time I got an answer to my letter. My father (living in the Old Country) was asking me some questions.

"Dear Son," he wrote, "we do not understand all that you told us in your letter. Tell us plainly what you mean by 'kara'. Is it God's "kara" (punishment), a 'kara' (brown) mare, or something else?"

I wrote back that an auto is called here "a car", or "kara" and "gara", as some Canadian Ukrainians say it.

(Told by *W. Sawchuk of Kuroki, Sask., August 12, 1954*)

## THE EMPEROR STILL REMEMBERED

I came to Canada in 1949. The first place that I got off the train was Winnipeg. Here I met some of the first Ukrainian pioneers of Canada. I made some very interesting contacts. Some of these people are very kind and pleasant, though some of them still think of the Old Country in terms of the old times when they came here, some time before the First World War. For instance, one of these women of pioneering days asked me:

“How’s now our Emperor Francis Joseph?”

I tried my best to explain to the old lady that Emperor Francis Joseph died a long time ago (in 1917), but I could see that she did not quite believe my story.

(Told by *Mrs. L. Sh.*, Winnipeg, Man., January 8, 1954)

## TELEVISION

When word came that a television broadcasting station was going to be built in our city I heard on one occasion a family discussion on the subject. The question was: "Should the family buy a television set?" All the members of the family expressed their opinion on the subject, with the exception of the old grandfather, who sat quietly, nodding his head from time to time. But when all the rest of the family gave their approval to the idea of buying the TV set the old man protested loudly against the idea, saying:

"I simply do not understand why you want to buy such an expensive machine. Just imagine! You will have continually to buy new film reels for it!"

(Told by *Miss M. Bodnarchuk*, Winnipeg, Man., August 3, 1953)

## HE DRESSED HIMSELF PROPERLY

There was a fire in Winnipeg. One of the tenants jumped through the window in a shirt only. The people standing on the street were dissatisfied:

— Look he is not dressed properly — they said.

The man after having heard this returned home and in few minutes appeared again on the street in the same shirt but with a tie around his neck . . .

(P. F. K., Winnipeg, Manitoba, 22. 7. 1954)

## 5. FOLKSONGS ABOUT CANADA

### AFTER COMING TO CANADA

I found here not a path, not a trail,  
But just woods and water.  
Whichever way I looked  
I saw a strange land.

There was not a path nor a trail,  
But a large tract of woods.  
As far as I could see  
I saw a new land.

(Recorded from *Mrs. W. Yurchak* of Roblin, Man., May 18, 1953)

## IN A STRANGE LAND

Do not murmur so sadly,  
Oh you green woods:  
Do not sadden me more  
In this strange land.

I am pining away in this land:  
Like a plant I wither.  
There is no one here  
Who would cheer me up.

(Recorded from *A. Mandziy* of Vancouver, B.C., 1954)



## MY HUSBAND IS SOMEWHERE IN CANADA

Since my husband went to Canada  
It's already twenty years.  
Now he does not write  
To me and our children.

For God's sake, my man,  
What happened to you?  
Can't you get some paper in Canada  
And write me a letter?

The dollars that you have sent me  
I have not wasted.  
I bought with them food for the children  
And I bought a piece of land.

Yes, mother has bought a lot of land  
And built us a new house.  
So do come home, father,  
Come home, father dear.

(Recorded from *Yaroslava Lewko* of Kirkland Lake, Ont.,  
by Mrs. T. Koshetz, 1951)

## I WAS BORN IN MANITOBA

I was born in Manitoba, in Alberta I grew up:  
How happy I was in this world before I fell in love!  
Why don't you visit me, my darling, as in the past?  
Why don't you come over again with a bouquet of  
rosy flowers?

I have picked these flowers myself, with this one leaf.  
I got some lilies from the hill and some blossoms  
from an orchard.

I was sitting in the shade of a tree, embroidering  
his name.

I gave him the handkerchief with his name when he  
was going to war.

"The handkerchief that you gave me, sweet girl I  
applied to my wound,

It saved me and reminded me of my true love for you."

That's how it was: I was sitting in a shade,  
embroidering his name.

I gave him the handkerchief when to the war he went.

(Recorded from *Mary Yurkiv*, of Flatbush, Alta., February 5, 1955)

## OUR BELOVED CANADA

Our beloved Canada, your touch is so sad,  
You have parted many a man from his wife.

A swallow has lost a feather from her wing  
And I have lost my darling man when he went  
to Canada.

O swallow, return and pick your feather:  
My darling, return to me and unlock my heart.

Return, O swallow, and make a nest here,  
Return to me, my darling, and love me again.

(Recorded from *Mrs. Ulyana Gangur* of Lethbridge, Alta.,  
June 3, 1953)

## CANADA IS OUR MOTHER

America is our sister, and Canada is our mother.  
One can make a lot of money in Canada.

I live well and work well in Canada,  
I put on my best clothes on Saturdays.

I have my tie on and a watch in my vest,  
I walk, hands in my pockets, loaded with money

But of not much use is my money to me,  
As my wife pleads in her letters to return.

Sometimes I sit down for an hour  
And write a letter to my family,

In clear black letters on a white paper,  
But my letter brings tears to their eyes.

O Canada, Canada, your hold is tight,  
You keep us men here, away from our wives.

You have broken up so many families:  
Who will feed the children in the Old Country?

(Recorded from *Mrs. I. Levko*, Kirkland Lake, Ont.  
by Mrs. T. Koshetz, June 3, 1953)

## THINKING OF BUKOVINA IN CANADA

*(Bukovina — a province of Ukraine)*

My native Bukovina, my beloved land,  
Whenever I, a poor orphan, think of you  
Tears run down my face here, in this strange land,  
Where I am withering up like a leaf in the sun.

Here I do not hear my mother tongue,  
Here I find none of my kith and kin,  
I have here no father, nor family, nor my own  
house.

O God, it is hard to live in a strange land.

*(This is a well-known Ukrainian verse, by S. Vorobkevych, passing around as a folk song.)*

*(Recorded from Mrs. A. Mandziy of Vancouver, B.C., 1954)*

## A SONG IN CANADA RE-ECHOES

O my Ukrainian song,  
You sweeten my days,  
For I learned you  
From my dear mother.

O my mother from Ukraina,  
Living here, in Canada,  
Keep on teaching your children  
To sing your native songs.

Gratefully they will remember you,  
Just as I remember mine,  
Though my mother for many years  
Has been lying in the grave.

My mother rests in the grave  
Of her native land,  
But her songs still re-echo  
From my own lips.

(Recorded from *M. Koshman*, Vegreville, Alta., 1953)



## LET'S SING IN CANADA

Let's sing in Canada,  
Though we are not always employed.  
No landlords oppress here,  
So let us sing.

The wheat thrives well here,  
And so do oats and barley.  
We raise big potatoes,  
And we have wild pears and cherries.

We have goose berries and nuts  
To cheer up our children.  
We have gooseberries and nuts  
And a lot of mushrooms.

To be true, we should now speak  
About the things that do not thrive here,  
Things which do not grow,  
Though you plant them.

The summer is too short here for maize,  
Nor do the cucumbers thrive well;  
Pumpkins have even less chance,  
As August frosts cut them down.

(Recorded from *Mrs. F. Cherewyk* of Yorkton, Sask., Aug. 23, 1953)

## A FARM LIFE

Good friends, I am going to tell you  
About our farm life:  
When a farmer kills a pig  
And changes it into smoked meat  
It keeps him well-fed  
Until the crop is in.

(Recorded at McGregor, Man., May 17, 1953)

## YOU LET ME GO ACROSS THE SEA, MOTHER

You let me go across a wide sea, mother,  
And now you sorrow after me.  
I am in America now, mother, and all is well:  
I am earning many dollars in a textile mill.  
I keep my eyes glued to these moving threads  
To keep the threads from tangling in my loom —  
Broken threads have to be joined again.  
I earn more dollars as time flies by.

I couldn't sleep last night, for an owl kept hooting  
loudly,  
So I thought of my mother's parting words,  
And of my old father's sound advice.  
Oh, how I wish I could make their wishes come true.

(From J. Dziobko, Virden, Man., March 3, 1956)

### TELL NO ONE, DEAR LADY

Tell no one, please, dear lady,  
Of my casual visit at your home. (2)

You know, it's easy to get lost in Canada,  
To get lost and find a hospitable friend. (2)

That's how I lost my way and found your house  
Where you have treated me so very well. (2)

Ah, what a treat it is to be here, in your home,  
Resting and chatting with you. (2)

After this rest, I'll keep going on,  
But some day I may again drop in here for a  
chat. (2)

If you will kindly take me in again,  
I'll repay you, dear lady, with gratitude. (2)

(From *J. Dziobko*, Virden, Man., March 3, 1956)

## HE SWEARS AT ME IN ENGLISH

*(Canadian Ditty)*

He swears at me in English, threatening like  
a cockerel,  
And I holler at him: "Me no like man like you!"  
I never "kick back" but keep drudging on,  
Sometimes talking to him in high tones,  
And that makes him rush at me really mad.

Then I go over to my good neighbour Molly  
And tell her all my troubles at home.  
She knows so much, my neighbour Molly does,  
She tells me what I should do.

"You may call in a policeman  
And let him arrest your hubby.  
That would teach him  
That here 'no man can his missus fight,."

(February 9, 1955, Kamsack, Sask., *M. A. Bebyk*)

## CANADIAN KOLOMYJKAS

I tramp here, in Canada, counting mile after mile:  
Whenever a night overtakes me, there I sleep.

(Recorded at Ladywood, Man.)

●

One lives well at Komarno,  
Without any worries at all,  
Eating and singing,  
And counting money.

(Recorded at Komarno, Man.)

●

A gentle breeze blows from the woods,  
Making life sweet in the children's camp.  
Oy tay dunay, dunay, dunay,  
Oy tay dunay, dana.

They guard, they drill, and take long walks,  
The whole day long they sing from early morning.  
Oy tay dunay, etc.

●

Our fire blazes friendly every night,  
Who has not been at a camp does not know what  
happiness is.  
Oy tay dunay, etc.

(Recorded at Ukrainian Park, Man.)



## O MY DEAR WIFE

*(A versified letter to his wife in the Old Country)*

O my dear wife, what was there to do?  
I wanted to go to Canada and leave you behind,  
To leave you in the Old Country and go alone to  
Canada,  
To earn there some money and return.  
For a half-year I kept thinking of my decision.  
At last I was getting ready for my trip.  
When I was ready and about to leave  
All our relatives came to our home to bid me goodbye.  
I said goodbye to all and took my place in the wagon.  
You were by me, dear, and both of us started to cry.  
Tears were rolling down your face, dear; others  
cried too;  
I was sad to leave you and our children behind, going  
far away.  
When I left our village behind I bowed and said:  
"Forgive me, my kinsmen, if I was at odds with some  
of you.  
Farewell, dear kinsmen, farewell dear church, O Holy  
Mother!  
God alone knows, if I return to lay down my bones  
here."  
When I came to our city of Chernivtsi to buy my  
ticket,  
I was so sad I almost came back home from there.  
"No matter what happens, out of sheer shame I am  
not going back.  
Let God's will be done," I thought in my grief.  
Then the travel agents began to console me,  
With my money in their pockets, while taking us to  
a ship.

Oh many a day and night our ship sailed on,  
With nothing around us but the boundless sea and  
our sorrow.

On either hand I could see no shore, so wide it is,  
And, I suppose, nobody knows yet how deep is the sea.  
It was two o'clock in the afternoon when we landed  
in Canada.

Later an agent told us to get off our train in a valley,  
There were many people, walking gypsy-like, in the  
wooded valley.

Each group lay down by a fire for the night.  
Next morning we got up, with tear-stained faces,  
Thinking that here was to be our end . . .  
By and by I met some of those who wrote to me from  
Canada.

With their sun-burnt faces, they looked to me like  
gypsies.

These farmers, living in the woods, are getting on well.  
They go far in search of work, leaving their wives  
in the woods.

Each of them puts a chunk of bread in his bag  
And then starts wandering through the woods and  
wilderness, looking for a job.

When they run short of food, while in search of work,  
They kneel down and feed themselves on all kinds of  
berries.

At last he lands a job and starts working,  
Shovelling gravel into his wheel-barrow and lugging  
it away.

I have landed such a job, too, lugging away stones  
and gravel.

(O Lord, will I ever see you and the Old Country  
again?)

I sleep, too, in these shady, sombre woods,  
Thus I lord it over here, my dear.

But don't you worry, my beloved wife, over my  
worries:

I still sometimes sing a little and even smile now and then.

Sometimes I run short of paper, dear, and do not write more often to you:

Sometimes I get lost in the woods while going to the post office.

Oh, I wish the woods would stop murmuring.

Their sad murmurings make my heart more sad.

I am so alone here, like a lonely plant forgotten by a harvester.

No one is here who would cheer me up or console.

I have no brother, sister, or father here.

Like a lost sheep I wander back and forth through Canada.

To the call of a lost sheep other sheep reply by and by,

But a mountain echo answers the mournful call of a lonely man.

(Recorded in 1953 by Mrs. A. Mandziy of Rainy River, Ontario)



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